

It's part of the sport: Exploring how social identification with sports groups predicts gambling behaviour

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Background

- Previous research has indicated that social relationships are a strong factor in the maintenance of gambling harms.
- There are certain sports (e.g., football), wherein gambling has become a normalised part of socialising within these groups.
- While some research has found sports participation is a predictor of gambling behaviour, there is a lack of work exploring how social identification with sports groups might predict gambling and which aspects of gambling it might be linked to (e.g., frequency of gambling, amount gambled, attitudes to gambling).
- Furthermore, while we know about how socialisation can lead to gambling in families, we know little about how people experience the normalisation of gambling within wider social groups.

Keywords: Gambling, Sport, Social Identity

Research Aim 1:

To explore the role of social identification with sports groups in gambling behaviour.

- **Research Question 1:** Which aspects of gambling behaviour are linked to social identification with sports groups?
- **Research Question 2:** Is the relationship between sports engagement and gambling behaviour moderated by social identification with sports groups?
- **Research Question 3:** How do people experience the normalisation of gambling within sports social groups?

Research Aim 2:

To synthesize findings into recommendations for stakeholders and relevant parties (e.g., gambling regulators, public health bodies, youth and sport organisations).

Experts by Experience

Throughout the project, we will be working with Experts by Experience (EbEs) to ensure that the research is relevant and useful to those who have lived experience of gambling harms.

Methods

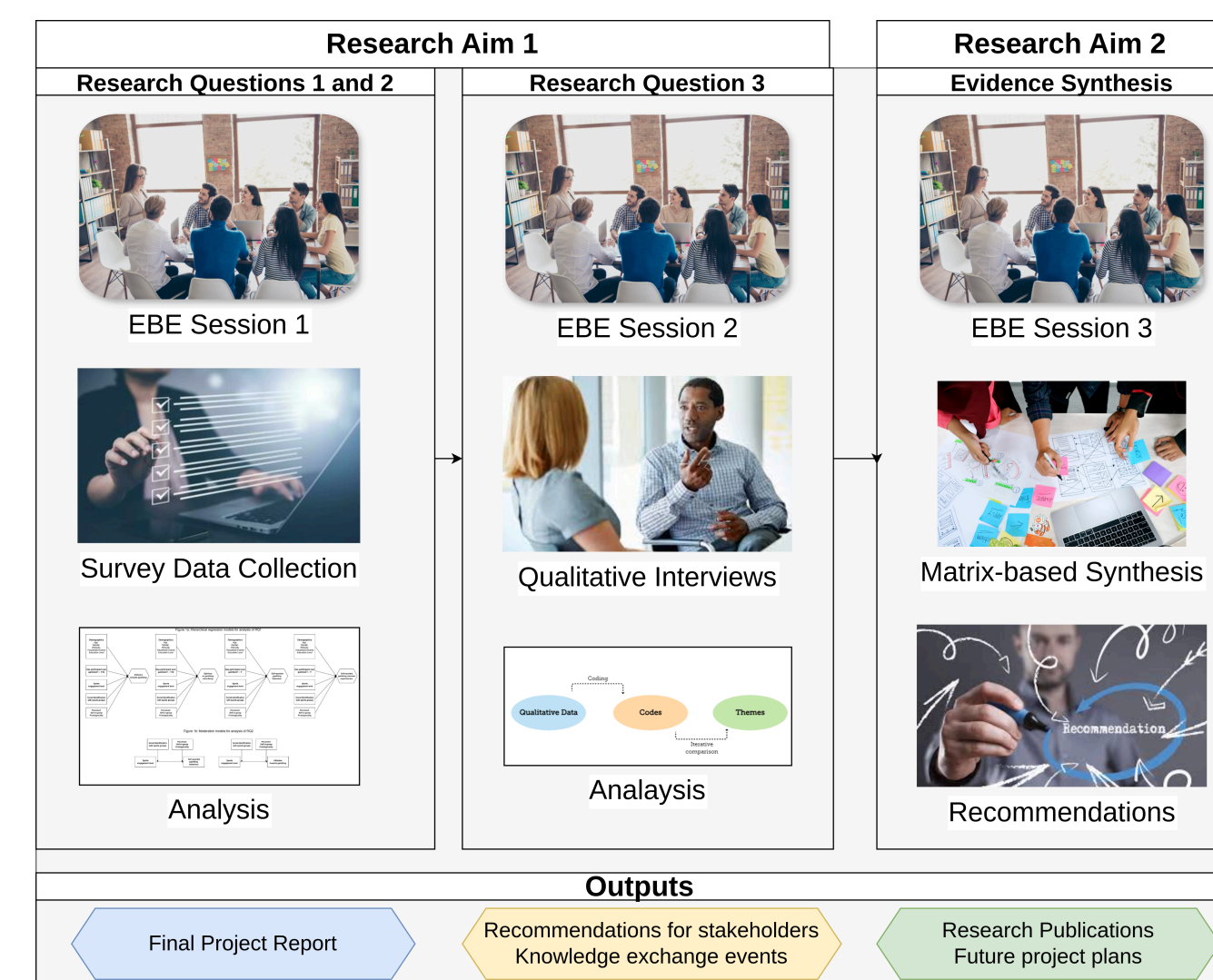


Figure 1: Overview of project

Knowledge Exchange

The project will include a Knowledge Exchange (KE) event to share findings with stakeholders and the public. This will involve online and in-person events with stakeholders to discuss the findings and develop recommendations for practice.

Analysis

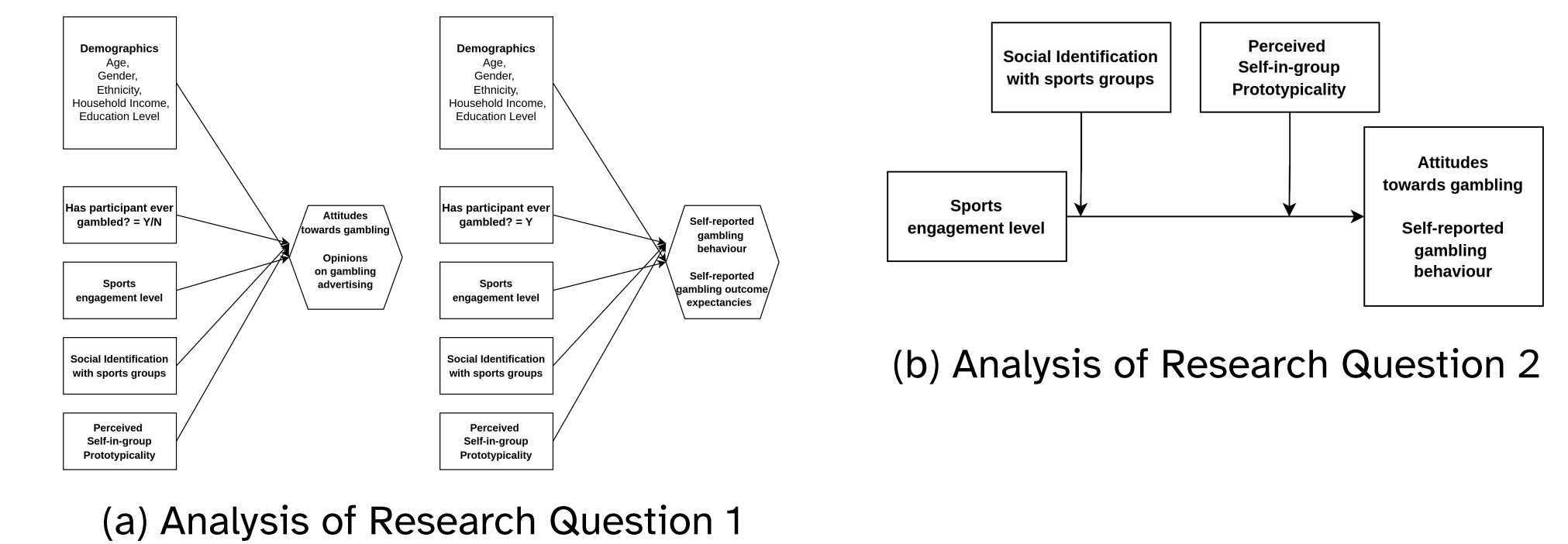


Figure 2: Hierarchical and moderation models will be used to explore the relationship between social identification with sports groups and gambling behaviour.

Interview data will be analysed using Framework Analysis (Gale et al., 2013). This will enable systematic comparison while preserving contextual depth and facilitate comparisons across participant experiences. The process involves familiarisation, coding, indexing, and thematic mapping, organised into a matrix for structured interpretation.

Applications and future directions

- This project would be a first exploration of how normalisation of gambling happens within specific social groups.
- Expansion of this approach to other social groups and understanding which aspects of gambling behaviour are driven by social identification could lead to more targeted and effective interventions in the future



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